

Grading guide gets off to a delayed start

By Roger Boye

AS EXPECTED, the American Numismatic Association's guide to coin grading won't be completed in time for the organization's convention, which begins Tuesday in Atlanta.

However, collectors attending the hobby's biggest annual extravaganza will see sample pages from the book that could become a coin-collecting best seller.

Whitman Coin Products, part of Western Publishing Co. of Racine, Wis., is producing the book, which should be on dealers' shelves by late November. Kenneth Bressett, manager of Whitman, is in the process of rewriting the manu-

script submitted by the ANA.

"Until I started working on the manuscript, I didn't know how much there was to determining the condition of coins," Bressett said.

In rewriting, Bressett wants to make the manuscript "simple, so anyone can use it." Earlier this year, several coin dealers criticized the original draft for being too complicated and confusing. The criticism meant additional work that delayed the target date for publication until November.

"The attitude of dealers has changed tremendously in the last several weeks. I've been getting a very favorable reaction (to the rewrite)."

The 384-page, hard-cover book will be about the size of the Red Book and will cost \$5.95. The cover is primarily gray.

"The book ('Official ANA Grading Standards for United States Coins') will be far more complete and have a lot more detail than anything that now exists on coin grading," Bressett added. All U.S. coins are included, and most are described in 13 grades.

Although parts of the manuscript now are being set in type, the final draft must be approved by ANA executives before the presses start to roll. The ANA is the nation's largest organization of coin collectors with more than 32,000 members.